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ABSTRACT

Papers on library services and developments in reading materials for the blind and disabled presented at the 1984 IFLA general conference include: (1) "The Establishment of a Library Service to Visually Handicapped People in African Developing Countries" (Paulli Thomsen, Denmark); (2) "Sources of Assistance for Establishing Braille Facilities" (Elizabeth Twining, United Kingdom); (3) "Presentation of a Guide to Developing Braille and Talking Book Services" (Edwige Mortyr, Norway); (4) "Library Services to the Blind in Kenya" (James Mwangi Ng'ang'a, Kenya); (5) "Central Library Services to the Disabled" (Dick Reumer, Netherlands); (6) "Guidelines for Libraries Serving Hospital Patients and Disabled People in the Community--A Tool to Improve Library Service" (Gunar Westgard and Bjorg Heie, Norway); (7) "Public Library Services to the Disabled--Their Information Needs and Special Materials" (Ongare Owino and Edward Waiguru Muya, Kenya); (8) "Producing Braille in Africa: Outlines of a Feasibility Study" (Rainer F. V. Witte, West Germany); and (9) "Presentation of the Work of the Section of Libraries for the Blind" (Winnie Vitzansky, Denmark). (THC)

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The Establishment of a Library Service to Visually Handicapped People in African Developing Countries

by

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INTRODUCTION

Visually handicapped people all over the world should be given the same opportunities for education, vocational training and employment as well as for taking active part in the general cultural and political debate in society as their sighted peers.

Books, magazines, periodicals etc. are main sources for the educational, cultural and political life in any society of today. Consequently, the establishment of a production system of reading material - in braille and on tape - together with a library service for visually handicapped readers becomes, not only a matter of finance and technique, but also a matter of social concern, politics and priorities.

The aims and objectives of a library service to visually handicapped people - and specifically to those in developing countries - may not differ from the aims and objectives of a public library service as it is stated in the "UNESCO Public Library Manifesto"...

"The public library is the principal means whereby the record of man's thoughts and ideas, and the expression of his creative imagination, are made freely available to all.

The public library is concerned with the refreshment of man's spirit by the provision of books for relaxation and pleasure, with the assistance to the students, and with the provision of up-to-date technical, scientifical and sociological information. The public library should be established under the clear mandate of law, so framed as to ensure nation-wide provision of public library service. Organized co-operation between libraries is essential so that total national resources should be fully used and be at the service of any reader.

It should be maintained wholly from public funds, and no direct charge should be made to anyone for its services.

To fulfill its purposes, the public library must be readily accessible, and its doors open for free and equal use by all members of community regardless of race, colour, nationality, age, sex, religion, language, status, or educational attainment."

A library service to visually handicapped readers assumes an additional responsibility as the one of a public library as quoted above, because it in its selection and production of reading material becomes the only real access to written information for the visually handicapped reader.

Another significant difference between a public library and a library for the blind is the existence of a special production system either as an integrated part of the library or working in close links with it. Therefore, the establishment of production systems for the production of reading material in braille and on tape is an essential prerequisite for a national library service for visually handicapped people.

Although library service to visually handicapped people in principle is a matter of cultural and social concern it is indispensable in practice to take into consideration the high level of costs of production compared to the relatively small numbers of users.

In countries with very limited resources target groups and priorities are therefore essential matters to discuss at the initial stage of the establishment of library service to visually handicapped people in African developing countries.

I TARGET GROUPS

(i) The Incidence of Blindness

The world's blind population is by now about 40 million, children and adults, according to recent estimates released by the World Health Organization. Eighty (80) per cent of them live in developing countries. Information from WHO indicates that there is an increase in the number of blind people and WHO predicts that without a great effort started now towards prevention and treatment, there should be twice as many blind people by the year 2000.

A considerable proportion of world blindness (up to 80 per cent in some areas) is avoidable; preventable or relatively easily curable. However, numerous countries still lack reliable information on the number and distribution of their blind population, and the causes of blindness.

The prevalence rates of blindness vary from continent to continent and from country to country (or even from one area to another in the same country) and range from below 0.01 per cent (in several industrialized countries) to 10.0 per cent or more.

The main causes of blindness are cataract (approx. 20.000 million blind), trachoma (approx. 10 million blind), onchocerciasis also known as river blindness, and xerophthalmia.

Xerophthalmia, caused by vitamin A deficiency, afflicts more than 250.000 young children in developing countries - each year.

According to the Helen Keller International only one out of fourteen (14) blind children and even fewer blind adults in developing countries receive any services to help them deal with their problems.

These staggering statistics aptly reveal the ever growing problem of world blindness - and in particularly of preventation and treatment of blindness in developing countries.

With the already existing high incidence of blindness in these countries and the predictable increasing number of children and adults going blind, there is also a great need for an establishment or extension of educational, social and other services to these people, including a library service.

(ii) The identification of target groups

In many African countries of today the existing educational system embraces educational opportunities for the visually handicapped, too. Some blind students, after the completion of their primary and secondary education have even succeeded in being admitted to universities or other higher educational institutions. Some visually handicapped people, although an absolute minority, have been employed in gainful jobs after having completed their vocational or academical training. To this group of visually handicapped also belongs the educated newly or late-blind adults.

However, the illiterate blind, still represents the far largest group of visually handicapped people in Africa.

The question of target groups and priorities was discussed in details at the UNESCO/IFLA seminar on "Library Service to Visually Handicapped Readers in African Developing Countries," held in Tanzania in November 1980.

The participants, eighteen (18) representing library associations and associations for or of the blind in fifteen (15) African countries identified the target groups as follows.

1. The visually handicapped in institutions (i.e., primary and secondary schools, training colleges, universities, vocational or rehabilitation centres).
2. The educated, employed visually handicapped people, including the newly-blind, educated adults.
3. The illiterates who represent the majority of the visually handicapped population in Africa.

Due to the limited financial and human resources in the countries represented at the seminar the participants realized the necessity of priorities in library service to the identified target groups.

The participants concluded that those in institutions should be given first priority as regards library service. Within the institutions, emphasis should be placed on primary school children and secondary school students "because they are the foundation members of the educated blind population."

All participants expressed however a great concern regarding the education and information needs of the illiterate blind in Africa and they hoped that government authorities would take the necessary action in order to fulfill them.

II A STATE OF THE ART OF LIBRARY SERVICE TO VISUALLY HANDICAPPED READERS IN AFRICAN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Braille production facilities already exist in many African countries whereas an established and organized library service is almost non-existing.

The braille production capacity is first and foremost used for the production of educational material distributed to the residential primary schools for the blind and to blind students in secondary schools.

A few countries have established recording studios for the production of talking books, mostly textbooks for students.

In the few countries having a library for the blind the stock holding of braille and talking books is based on donations from over-seas countries. These books however have no or very little direct bearing on the cultural and social background of the readers.

Table 1 and table 2 below, based on information gathered from the participants in the Tanzanian seminar 1980, show that in all countries represented braille is in use as a reading medium, and to a limited extent talking books. Only two of the countries represented do not produce any braille material at all (table 1).

Table 1: List of material in use, per country represented.

COUNTRY	MATERIAL IN USE
Cameroun	- braille
Ethiopia	- braille
The Gambia	- braille, talking books, large print
Ghana	- braille, talking books
Liberia	- braille, large print
Mauritius	- braille, talking books, large print
Nigeria	- braille, talking books, large print
Sierra Leone	- braille, talking books
Tanzania	- braille, talking books
Uganda	- braille, talking books, large print
Zambia	- braille, talking books

Table 2:

COUNTRY	MATERIAL PRODUCED	MATERIAL/ BORROWED FROM	MATERIAL/ DONATED BY
Cameroun	NIL	brl. (UK, France)	brl. (UK, France)
Ethiopia	brl.	brl. (Libr. of Congress)	N/A
The Gambia	tlk. bks.	N/A	brl. (UK, USA)
Ghana	brl.	brl. + tlk. bks. (UK, USA)	brl. + tlk bks. (USA, France, UK)
Liberia	brl.	NIL	brl. + large pr. (USA)
Mauritius	brl. + tlk. bks.	brl. + tlk. bks. + large pr. (UK, USA, France, India S. Africa)	brl. + tlk bks. + large pr. (as borrowed from)
Nigeria	brl.	brl. + tlk. bks. (UK, USA)	N/A
Sierra Leone	brl.	NIL	brl. (UK, USA)
Tanzania	brl. + tlk. bks. (2 studios)	NIL	NIL
Uganda	NIL	NIL	brl. + large pr. (UK, USA)
Zambia	brl.	NIL	brl. + tlk. bks. (UK, USA)

Most countries have only small scale production facilities (thermoform). National braille presses for large scale production only exist in some few African countries due to the high initial costs of the establishment of a braille press.

Although braille has been introduced in most African countries many blind children do not go to school because of lack of textbooks in braille. For the same reason blind adults have no opportunities of participating in existing adult education programmes.

Consequently there is an immediate need for extension of the braille production facilities in order to make more educational material available to all groups of blind people.

III SUGGESTION FOR AN EXTENDED LIBRARY SERVICE SCHEME

As a precondition for rendering library service to visually handicapped readers, braille and talking book facilities should, as far as possible be established in individual African countries. Furthermore, an efficient distribution system is as an important part of an extended library scheme as the production of books and other relevant reading material in braille or on tape.

The organization of a library service to visually handicapped readers will differ from one African country to another, according to varying local conditions.

Regardless of such conditions, however, every effort should be made to avoid establishing new systems where such systems and facilities are already in existence and might be utilized.

Library service to visually handicapped readers differs in many ways from library service to sighted readers and, in practice it is a specially organized system. At the same time it is basically comparable to library service to sighted readers, in the sense that all aspects of library service are needed by both groups of readers.

In order to render library service to visually handicapped readers as efficient as possible, it is important to decide to what extent existing library systems can render these readers full service; whether new specially organized systems have to be established and whether the best solution might not be to establish specially organized library systems for the visually handicapped readers.

Whatever system is decided on the production of braille and tape-recorded reading material should be carried out by one unit serving the whole country. Thus making sure that expertise, equipment and financial resources are used as efficiently as possible. The library and the production unit may be organized administratively in two sections of one institution, or be totally separated. In both cases the library would be responsible for the selection of books to be produced.

In planning the organization of a library service particular attention must be paid to the distribution system.

There is no "right solution," since distribution depends on local conditions such as postal services, existing library systems, accommodation, target groups and financial resources.

Regardless of the type of distribution system chosen, a central braille and talking book library should be organized. In addition to being the central or the resource library, such a library would serve as a clearing-house and ensure efficient inter-library lending, the exchange of material etc.

One main question regarding distribution is whether the central library for the blind should distribute books,

a. through institutions (e.g., schools, rehabilitation centres, local library units) only;
b. through institutions and to individuals, too;
c. to individuals only.

The choice will affect the central library, the local library as well as the readers.

In countries with poor communication systems and the patrons often living in rural and remote areas, the solution "a" may be the most efficient way of serving the readers.

In other countries again both "b" and "c" might be applicable depending on the size and infrastructure of the country.

The other major question is whether library service to visually handicapped readers should be offered through existing library systems, or whether a special system should be organized.

Specially organized systems should be avoided, but if the only way to get started is to organize a special system, measures should be taken to ensure cooperation with the public library system at a later stage, when awaiting conditions which might prove to be favourable.

USING EXISTING PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Advantages:

- the infrastructure (i.e., buildings, information services, mobile unit already exists;
- trained personnel already belongs to the system;
- funding is probably a minor problem since only additional funds are likely to be required and not a large amount, as would be required for a completely new service.

Disadvantages:

- in many public libraries. shortage of storage facilities and working space is already a problem;
- braille book may be specially difficult to store in the library;
- material for distribution to visually handicapped readers may be inadequate;
- the staff is not trained for running a service to visually handicapped readers, nor for the maintenance of the material. This may make it difficult for the new tasks to be accepted by the librarians working in the library system.

ESTABLISHING A SPECIALLY ORGANIZED SYSTEM

Advantages:

- the staff is specially trained and facilities specially designed to meet the needs of the visually handicapped readers;
- information on the interests and needs of the visually handicapped readers can be obtained more easily since the whole service serves this group of readers only.

Disadvantages:

- high capital expenditure and running costs may prevent authorities from providing funds for such a new service;
- the importance of employing professional librarians may be overlooked because a library for the blind in many cases is looked upon as an institution with a social objective instead of a cultural and educational one like a public library.

There are relevant advantages and disadvantages in using existing public library systems and specially organized ones.

Provided enough special reading material is available, accommodation and facilities are adequate, and the staff is given special training for this type of work, the establishment of a library service to visually handicapped people through the existing public library system may be an advantage in most countries. If the existing library system is inadequate and unable to serve visually handicapped readers, a specially organized system should then be established. The aim, however, should be to incorporate it in the public library system at a later stage, when conditions have improved.

CONCLUSION

The academic, cultural and social advancement of the blind in Africa today has become very necessary and should be regarded as an integral part of the future development of each African country. It is therefore important that books and other relevant library material is made available readily for the use of the blind.

So far, the blind and visually impaired people have been deprived most of the printed material accessible to sighted people.

This low level of information is, of course, a most unsatisfactory situation which makes these people, to an unacceptable high degree, dependent on sighted people to read for them.

Consequently, the establishment of a library service to blind and visually impaired people would be an important step forward in their advancement and integration into society as a whole.

SUMMARY

The users of a library service to visually handicapped people embraces all groups of people regardless of their educational, social and cultural background.

In most developing countries however, the limitation of financial resources may result in limitations in the library service which one can offer the visually handicapped person.

Consequently, the question of target groups and priorities are essential matters to discuss at the initial stage of the establishment of library service to visually handicapped readers.

Having identified the target groups, it is then possible to consider and decide on which of these groups should be given priority within a library service system for the visually handicapped readers.

As a precondition for rendering library service to visually handicapped readers, braille and talking book facilities should, as far as possible be established for individual African countries.

An efficient distribution system is as important as the production of books and other relevant reading material in braille or on tape.

The possibility of making use of existing public libraries in the distribution of braille and talking books should be taken into consideration.

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1984

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Libraries Serving the General Public

Section: Libraries for the Blind

Sources of Assistance for Establishing Braille Facilities

by

Elizabeth TWINING

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Royal National Institute for the Blind

London, U.K.

Meeting 104

The relationship between the giver of a gift and the recipient of it can be very difficult to cope with, particularly perhaps for the recipient. It takes real talent to ensure that you get what you want, and real generosity to be grateful when you do not! The overseas aid field provides all too many examples of the ways in which this relationship can go wrong, and how aid agencies can supply, sometimes at great expense, equipment or services which are not what the recipient wanted, and which create more resentment than goodwill.

In considering sources of assistance in establishing braille facilities I have therefore tried to look at some of the problems involved for both donor and recipient in meeting their often conflicting objectives. I have talked to people who have been involved in braille projects in developing countries, and have done a fair amount of reading on the subject. However, I cannot claim to have made a comprehensive survey of the field - what follows are my personal impressions and opinions, based largely on Western European sources. I hope to provoke discussion rather than present solutions.

Nowadays, the donor agencies supplying aid funds to developing countries usually say that their main objective is to benefit the poorest people in a country, to help countries to achieve basic minimum standards of food production, health, education and so on. Organisations like the United Nations, UNESCO and the International Labour Office have promoted this approach. A term often used to describe it is "developmental."

It can be applied equally well to assistance for disabled people. The opening sentence of the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons reads: "The purpose of the World Programme ... is to promote effective measures of prevention of disability, rehabilitation and the realization of the goals of 'full participation' of disabled persons in social life and development, and of 'equality.'"[1] One aid agency to which I spoke did suggest that assistance for braille facilities might not be considered "developmental" in this sense, but clearly the United Nations does not share this view.

However, donors tend also to have practical objectives, which may conflict with their ideals. For instance, they usually want their money to be spent efficiently, to achieve the maximum effect for the minimum expenditure. They may want to supply goods or equipment from a particular source - this is often the case with government-to-government aid. They may have their own ideas about what the recipient requires, dictated by their own circumstances, philosophies and experiences rather than by those of the recipient. They usually require that the project will eventually be funded and maintained by the recipient. Finally, they want the project to be a good public relations exercise. As a result, aid programmes may not work in practice quite as they are supposed to in theory. I can illustrate some of these points from the British book aid programme as it operated in the mid-70s. Being a cultural programme, it also offers parallels with the supply of braille materials.

The objective of the British book presentation programme was to help schools, colleges and other institutions with a part to play in the country's development, to build up their library facilities. There was no standard package of books, nor even a standard amount of money. Instead, the administrators of the programme in each country, usually British Council staff, drew up a separate proposal for each recipient institution, based on its situation, resources and needs, and suggesting an appropriate sum of money.

It was generally considered to be a very good programme, giving the recipients a lot of say in how the money was spent. However, there were restrictions which in some ways operated against the declared objectives of the programme. For instance, the books had to be for library use and the recipient had to select and order them. This meant that the largest grants tended to go to institutions which were relatively sophisticated and well established - to university faculties of agriculture rather than to agricultural extension colleges for instance. Further, the money had to be spent within one year, which made if difficult for small institutions to use it effectively. These rules did make the scheme cheap to administer, but they also meant that the money tended to go to those best able to spend it, not necessarily to those most in need.

More seriously perhaps, the books had to come from UK publishers and were supplied directly from the UK. The scheme therefore did nothing to promote the development of local publishing or bookselling - the money in fact never left Britain. Finally, the whole scheme was designed to promote something which the British Government considered desirable, i.e., library services. The recipients might sometimes have preferred to spend the money on something else!

Turning to braille production, the majority of projects which have received aid funds appear to be small-scale ones, using conventional technology, i.e., manual plate embossing machines combined with conventional printing presses producing press braille, or upward writers combined with thermoform machines producing plastic copies. There are obvious attractions for the donor in this type of project. The equipment it tried and tested, relatively cheap, and can at least in theory be operated and maintained by people with comparatively little technical knowledge. The press can usually be kept busy meeting national or even local needs, and will not be dependent on selling its products to other countries, with all the foreign exchange and other problems that this can bring.

The computer based projects have mostly been in relatively rich countries such as Saudi Arabia, and therefore have not involved the use of aid funds. However, I have heard of some proposals in this field, notably one from the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind. It will be interesting to see how these develop.

There certainly appears to be money available for braille production projects, provided that you approach the right agency with the right project. Apart from the Royal Commonwealth Society, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Christoffel Blind Mission (CBM) and UNESCO have all been involved in this field recently. One thing these agencies have in common is that they do not tie their aid to the purchase of equipment from particular sources. Since braille presses tend to use equipment from several countries, indeed from several continents, this can be an important factor in deciding whom to approach for help.

From the donor's point of view, one of the most important questions is likely to be the long-term future of the press. Braille presses are not cheap to run. They are labour-intensive, and they use large quantities of materials like heavyweight paper and plastic sheeting, which are not only expensive but often have to be imported. It is seldom possible to sell the products at a profit, and the market is usually restricted to one or at most a very few countries. The donor will therefore be looking for a commitment from a local organization to keep the press running - in practice this usually means the government. The only alternative is to look for a donor prepared to fund the press indefinitely. Some, particularly the charities, may be willing to do this.

As well as these practical questions - what sort of press is needed and how will it be kept running - there is the question of what type of material the press is to supply. This is where the "developmental" case has to be made. Donors tend to prefer projects geared to educational and practical needs and will want to try to ensure that whoever is meeting the running costs share their objectives.

There is of course more than one way of supplying braille, and more than one reading medium useful to blind people. Library facilities are perhaps as important as production facilities - indeed, if braille and tape materials are to be fully exploited, I would say that a library service is an essential backup. Not only can it keep and circulate copies of locally produced material, but it can also act as a centre for interlibrary co-operation, offering access to material produced all over the world.

Library services for the blind are often provided by the national library, and this may help in getting hold of aid funds. For instance, the British Government is contributing to a new building for the national library in Syria, which will incorporate facilities for visually handicapped users. The cost of these facilities will be a fairly small percentage of the total - but if the library had been built without them, it would have been far more difficult to make a case for them to be provided separately. Similarly there is no reason in principle why braille and tape books should not be provided under book aid programmes. I understand that the British book aid scheme would consider such requests, but very seldom receives them. So it is important for agencies for the blind to lobby their national library services, and the appropriate ministries, to try to ensure that their needs are remembered when aid packages are being put together. Of course there is no reason why agencies for the blind who wish to set up their own library services should not approach the aid agencies on their own account, but a proposal which forms part of a national strategy would, in my experience, stand a better chance than one which is quite independent of national library planning. For this sort of project the potential aid donors are perhaps different from those whom you would approach for a braille press - far more agencies are active and experienced in the field of aid to libraries.

Finally, what can braille libraries and producers in developed countries do to make life easier for those in the developing world? Most of us are not in a position to give away books or lend staff to any great extent - we are, whether we like it or not, required to give priority to blind people in our own countries. I would like however to suggest a few things which do seem feasible and perhaps in discussion we can explore this aspect further. Assistance does not necessarily mean money.

First, we can perhaps look at our pricing policies. The most expensive part of braille production is producing the original master copy. The production of additional copies on the other hand is much cheaper. By charging prices which attempt to recover all the initial costs we may price ourselves out of the market - for instance, the Little Oxford Dictionary is sold at nearly £150 per copy! A price which aimed at recovering little more than marginal costs of producing and selling the copy would bring the product within the reach of far more people and institutions, and might even generate more revenue in the long run.

Inter-library co-operation is another field where we can help at little cost. It makes little sense for someone in Kenya to transcribe or record a book if I have a copy sitting unused on my shelves. The traffic need not all be in one direction either. Many Western countries have substantial minorities from the developing world who would like to be able to read books in their mother tongue, so there is considerable scope for inter-library loan and exchange.

We can also perhaps be more generous in giving away surplus copies. Even if you do one day need to retrieve a copy you have given away, you may well be able to borrow it back. Storage is so expensive that a careful study of the economics might even show that the occasional retranscription was cheaper than keeping everything "just in case." With increasing automation the need to store hard copies is reducing anyway.

A very important job for the IFLA Section of Libraries for the Blind is in trying to reduce the barriers raised by copyright so that this sharing of resources is possible. For braille this is seldom a problem, but in the field of tape there is a lot to be done.

We should also bear the needs of other countries in mind in planning our own future production systems. There are advantages for us all in trying to standardize our formats, but most of all for those who do not have the resources to put right their mistakes, or to duplicate the material in a form they can use. I find it appalling that the paperless braille devices are all incompatible with each other. We should use our economic muscle to try to ensure that we are not cutting each other off from our products.

Automated braille production gives us other options, for instance producing books in Grade One as well as Grade Two. There is a considerable demand for Grade One material from braille learners and from those for whom English is a second language, and in meeting it we may also make our products accessible to a much wider market. Moreover, as many of you will know, there is to be a conference in 1987 on the revision of Standard English Braille, with a view to possible simplification, and unification of the British and American systems. I think it important that this conference should consider the interests of all those who read braille in English, not simply the expert braillists of Britain and North America - here again, perhaps there is a role for the IFLA section.

Lastly - advice. Many of the larger braille producers and libraries are called upon to show visitors round their facilities, to offer training, even perhaps to supply staff to help with aid projects. Most of us do as we are asked to the best of our ability, while perhaps wondering whether it is actually much use. Here again, I think there may be a role for the IFLA section in directing enquiries to those best able to answer them.

My subject was "sources of assistance for establishing braille facilities." I hope I have suggested some which are not being fully exploited at present, as well as some which are. I have also tried to suggest some areas in which this Section could help. Perhaps the best source of all however, is that we should not only recognise in theory that disabled people, and those in developing countries, have a right to a full and productive life, but that we should all try to be consciously aware of how even our everyday decisions can in practice affect that right. In the words of the Cocoyoc declaration:

"The purpose of development should not be to develop things, but to develop Man."[2]

We can all make a contribution to that.

Elizabeth Twining
June 1984

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IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

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Presentation of a guide to developing braille and talking book services

by

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For internal use only:

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PRESENTATION OF A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK SERVICES

The above mentioned guide consists of 8 chapters and 5 appendices. In the following I will refer to it as "the guide", and try to give a presentation of the subjects dealt with. I will not give any critical remarks, as this may be rather personal on my behalf.

Chapter 1: "Introduction"

In the Introduction the purpose of the guide is mentioned:

- To provide an overview of current to practise in producing braille and talking books.
- To describe some typical systems for producing reading materials.
- To provide guidance to those wishing to establish new facilities for producing reading materials, or to update older facilities.

All three important both to continue the work being done and as mentioned to help establish new producers and distributors of braille and talking books.

An international survey of producers and libraries of braille and talking books was carried out, and the survey results are used throughout the text in the Guide.

As mentioned in the introduction it is no longer necessary to start at zero. With information and help we may learn from others who have gained experience over a period of time.

Using the guide it is important to notice that all references to prices mentioned is in US dollars (1983), but as a guide only.

Chapter 2: "Knowing the population served"

It may be difficult to plan to produce talking books and braille books without knowing the users.

The Guide gives various suggestions on how we may gather information on our users and our potential users.

In addition we must have a knowledge of the nature of the population where our service is needed.

The alternatives to gather information about the population may be through official contacts, as departments or ministries of public health, education and so on. Information also may be obtained by other contacts, as an example: by persons who read household electric, water, gas meters, or by postmen in rural districts.

To obtain a thorough knowledge of the population a co-operation with governmental ministries will be essential.

A government health survey of the population may find causes to blindness, and then work out a program to remove the cause.
A health survey program in our country will give the information about other groups in the population who may need talking books and braille books.

Information about the population will when producing talking books and braille books help to decide the kind of literature to produce, whether educational or recreational reading.

Chapter III: "The Nature of Reading"

This chapter deals with reading both as a mental activity and motor activity. It explains the difference between gaze and vision, and why reading is important to us. We are told about what is demanded of our attention and reading ability to understand a romantic novel, a newspaper or a technical book.

Finally the book tells us how visual impairment affects the reading ability, and the difference between reading printed material, talking books and braille books.

The chapter continues to "The Development of Talking books and Braille books." We are told about the history of recording, and when and where the first recordings for the blind were made. It also tells about the technical progress of recording, and of the several forms in which the tape recorded talking book is produce today.

We also find the history of braille production systems, and the different systems of producing braille, from individual printing braille to computerised systems of today.

Chapter IV: "Creating a Facility - General Principles"

Chapter IV goes into planning and organization, and the text is directed towards the managing director.
The subjects presented are the problems of planning, organizing, staffing, budgeting and evaluation.
The subjects may be considered a job description for a managing director.

The managing director is given some advice on what is most likely to occur in producing and distributing talking books and braille books, such as the capacity of number of titles for production, different methods of production, the kind of literature to choose, and how the demand for the facilities will increase during the first years of production.

The advices given are useful whether the production is planned on large scale or on a small one, though the text itself considers the medium-sized.

Chapter V: "The Talking Book Facility"

The Guide goes into very detailed explanation about the technical aspect in producing talking books.
The equipment needed, such as the master recorder, the tapes, the cassettes, the studios. What kind of technical equipment which

is needed for a small-sized production, and what kind is needed for a medium sized production.

Not only the technical equipment is discussed, but we are also noticed to consider the labelling devices and the containers for distribution.

You may reckon this chapter as a step by step handbook in learning how to start a production.

Chapter VI: "The Braille Book Facility"

The chapter deals with the braille production and describes in every detail the steps to take, the equipment needed, the staffing, the kind of literature to produce, and of course the economy.
It describes the different systems for production and the pros and cons of every system, and what system is most suitable for a specific kind of production.

We get a set up of account for the production of 2000 braille pages pr. month and one for the production of 25000 braille pages pr. month based on vacuum forming systems, and one based on microprocessor based system.

All references to braille production in the Guide includes the discussion about contracted/uncontracted braille and abbreviations. The Guide gives no solution to the problem, but inform about the various opinions on the matter.

The chapter is just as the previous on Talking Book, a step by step handbook in producing Braille.

Chapter VII: "A Survey of Current Practice"

The survey form was sent to 439 organizations, of which 181 returned filled-in forms, which gives a response rate of 41.2

percent. The survey is presented in this chapter with the numbers of responses on each question.

The authors of the Guide say:
"So far as we know, this is the first time that a survey has been carried out to define the properties and activities of organizations providing reading materials to the blind and visually impaired persons over the world."

The information we may get from this survey is of great value, and a similiar survey ought to be repeated in the course of the next several years, as the Guide itself says.

The final Chapter, Chapter VIII: "The Future of Braille Books and Talking Books"

It is not easy to give prophecies on the future. An analysis of talking book and braille production by the Library of Congress in the USA has indicated a steady growth in talking book use, and a relatively flat or steady demand for Braille books.

This may not be the actual situation in every country, but we should regard the analysis as an indication only. Each of us must examine carefully the development in our own country in order to make plans for serving the needs of the visually impaired and blind population.

The technical progress will in many ways change the systems of producing both talking books and braille books. We may have within our reach the means to make such reading materials in effective and cost efficient ways, which in return will make us capable of serving our users even better.

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984
Division: Libraries Serving the General Public
Section: Libraries for the Blind

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Library Services to the Blind in Kenya

by

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LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE BLIND IN KENYA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are about 80,000 blind persons in Kenya of whom 30,000 are children. Before independence in 1963 there were only limited facilities for blind persons of all ages. The services that were available were under the auspices of voluntary organizations such as the Salvation Army, who are indeed the pioneers in this area. After independence the Kenya Government took serious interest in the welfare of the handicapped persons. In the field of education, the government established a special education section in the Ministry of Education in 1977.

In addition to the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of culture and Social Services is heavily involved in the provision of services to blind persons.

Voluntary organizations still provide a lion's share of services to the visually handicapped. Such organisations include the Kenya Society for the Blind, Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, Kenya Union of the Blind, The Christolffel Blindenmission, The International Eye Foundation and the Hardley School for the Blind.

EDUCATION

Although Kenya has no legislation regarding the education of the blind persons, schooling for the blind has been available since 1946 when the Salvation Army established the Thika School for the Blind. Since then the number of schools have increased slowly so that currently there are five primary and one secondary schools and two units attached to regular schools serving blind children.

These are:-

1. Thika Primary School for the Blind
2. Likoni Primary School for the Blind
3. St. Lucy's Primary School for the Blind
4. Kino's Primary School for the Blind
5. St. Oda's Primary School for the Blind
6. Thika High School for the Blind.

Pre-primary education is provided in the five primary schools for the Blind, while vocational training is offered at:-

1. Machakos Vocational Training Centre
2. Salvation Army, Thika Sheltered Workshop for the Blind
3. Sikri Agricultural Training Centre for the Blind and Deaf.
4. Kapenguria Sheltered Workshop.

The Hadley School for the Blind, which was established in Nairobi in 1969, offers correspondence courses to visually handicapped students leading to Kenya Junior Secondary School Examination, 'O' and 'A' level examinations.

The school also offers the opportunities for students who wish to continue or supplement their education, master new skills, advance their vacational opportunities, acquire new interests or enrich their cultural background in the convenience of their own home, through the supply of free brailled or recorded correspondence courses.

It should be added that Hadley school is a regional school serving the countries or English - speaking Africa.

The school has established a braille printing press.

Primary school is free for all school age children but due to financial and other constraints, attendance is not compulsory. As far as the blind persons are concerned, it is estimated that the number of persons attending school or vocational training is about 1200.

A survey done in 1980 by the Kenya Institute of Education showed that there were 814 students in all primary schools and 153 in secondary schools.

At the time of writing this paper, there are 26 blind students pursuing degree courses at the University, two of whom are post-graduates. Ten of these students are at the University of Nairobi and the rest at Kenyatta University College.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Introduction.

There is hardly any well organized library services for the blind in Kenya. Apart from a few services which we shall describe below, blind users have to use, if they so desire, regular libraries which are developed for the sighted people. This of course means that such blind persons would have to have a sighted person to read for them.

The few available services are geared towards meeting the text-book needs of those pursuing educational courses. Suffice it to add that even at this level there are problems as the former headmaster of the Thika School for the blind noted in his letter to the Standard of 25th August 1979 where he says:-

> "The teachers in this school had to cope with as little as only the reading material which they themselves can make".

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is helping to alleviate this problem by brailling all the basic text-books.

The Kenya Society for the Blind has been very active in this field and supplies equipment and other material to primary and secondary schools and blind students at Kenyatta University College and the University of Nairobi. For instance, during 1983, the society supplied 160 braille and mathematics kit to blind children. The kit which become the property of the child, contains all the basic equipment required by a child at primary school. For students at higher education, the society supplied a set of equipment, comprising a Perkins braille writer, a standard portable typewriter, a cassette tape recorder and 10 cassettes.

Library Service to children

As already explained above, the only service available to children is in form of material available in schools.

Library Service to Students

The Hadley School for the Blind has a students' braille library for students who take correspondence courses. About 117 braille books are sent out to students every month. The school is however only able to meet a quarter of the demand.

Hadley School for the Blind also helps students at institutions of higher learning through provision of brailled material. In addition to using its printing press, the school uses the services of the Prisons Department to braille individual text-books and other students requirements.

Within the last eight or so years, the number of blind students has increased and it is felt that this number will continue to rise as educational opportunities for the blind increase at primary and secondary level. The increased figure has been significant at Kenyatta University College. This growth led to the establishment in 1981 of a Blind Resource Centre at the College in the students' welfare department.

Kenyatta University College Library Services to the Blind

Soon after the Blind Resource Centre was established the welfare department realised they had no qualified manpower to handle library material. It was therefore decided that all reading material - braille and tape would be handled by the library while the welfare department would deal with all matters related to students' welfare.

The Blind Resource Centre, which was funded by the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, has equipment for brailling, and duplicating.

The library inherited 60 titles on tape and a few brailled material. A member of staff was appointed to head this section. As he had no experience, a 6 month study tour of library services for the Blind in the United Kingdom was organised by the British Council who funded this tour.

This section is now growing and has a sizeable collection of brailled and cassette taped material. Most of these material have been received as gifts. The section also acts as a link between the blind students and printed documents, and it has been observed that the library use by the blind students has increased significantly. For instance, in 1982/83 the section received 222 requests from blind students and was able to supply 174 from the printed sources. In addition a total of 23 titles of taped books and 24 brailled volumes were supplied.

The library moves into a new building soon. In the new building provision has been made for the establishment of an independent library service to the blind. Within this area, users will be able to find and use brailled and taped material. We also hope to provide 2 sound proof areas where braille typewriters can be used. It is hoped that this section will be a nucleaus for a major library service for the blind in Kenya.

Library Services to Adults

There are two organizations which provide service to adults namely Hadley School for the Blind and the Kenya Society for the Blind.

The Hadley School provides a general circulation library consisting of recreational material. Readers can borrow material from this collection by post. The school has experienced a major problem in the recovery of books. The Director is exploring possibilities of minimising the loses. Another problem is that most of these books are mainly English fiction and most users are not interested in this kind of literature. There is a heavy demand for novels in the African Writers series as well as material which can help improve ones skills. At the moment the school can only braille enough material in these areas to meet the needs of their correspondence students.

The Kenya Society for the Blind on the other hand runs on subscription basis a Talking Book Library, through the generous donation by the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind. The society heavily subsidizes this service. Monthly subscription was reduced in 1980 from Sh.40/- (£2) to Sh.10/-. It costs the society about Sh.200 - Sh.600 per; book.

This service has had fluctuating membership and is also dependent on availability of books from the manufacturers.

PROBLEMS

1. Most blind people cannot read braille.
2. Lack of information on material available in both braille or cassettes.
3. Lack of adequate knowledge on the information needs of blind people,
4. Lack of relevant books in braille or in any other format suitable for the blind.
5. Lack of equipment to convert available reading material in a format suitable for the blind.
6. Lack of adequate personnel to read printed material in the library to the blind students.
7. Lack of qualified manpower.

THE FUTURE

As we have already indicated in this paper, there is little organization and dissemination of information to the blind. Although there is a lot of concern about the development of education for the handicapped in Kenya, the librarians have not given much thought about the library needs of this category of users.

At Kenyatta University College, the problem has reached a level where it calls for some action. In order that we may develop an adequate library service, we need to know the potential informationnneeds of the blind students, and others. Towards this end, we are currently undertaking research to investigate among other things:-

1. The State-of-the-art of information facilities existing for the visually handicapped.
2. The possible nature and form of an information service which could be developed from academic and public libraries purposely for the visually handicapped.
3. The possibility of developing a national information framework which could either be centralized or decentralized.
4. Whether there is need for special training for the staff who could man information services for the visual handicaps.
5. Whether there would be a chance of improvement in the education for the visual handicaps if their information service is improved.

Due to lack of adequate funds, we have limited the area of investigation into Nairobi and its environs.

It is our hope that we shall be able to extend our library services not only to our blind students but to others, especially our ex-students. This will no doubt call for some extra funding. Towards this end, we have requested Unesco for funding to enable us develop a Unit for production of reading materials for the blind students at the College.

In the field of education, the future is clearer, There are proposals to:-

(a) Integrate handicapped students at all levels of education with sighted ones at regular schools.

(b) Build an institute of special education to train teachers of the handicapped for primary education.

(c) Establish a special education department at Kenyatta University College.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that as Kenya evolves a national information policy, the library service to the blind will be given high priority.

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Division: Libraries Serving the General Public

Section: Library Services to Hospital Patients and
Handicapped Readers, jointly with

Round Table: National Centres for Library Services

Central library services to the disabled

by

Dick REUMER

Chairman, ROTNAC

Director, Dutch Centre for Public Libraries

and Literature (NBLC)

The Hague, Netherlands

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Central library services to the disabled

by Dick Reumer, Chairman, ROTNAC

To be able to say something about this subject, it might be necessary to explain first what ROTNAC is and what a national centre is.

What is ROTNAC?

ROTNAC is the Round Table of National Centres for Library Services. The aims of the Round Table are the promotion of cooperation between the members, the exchange of information on new plans, the comparison of working methods and results, and the promotion of centralized services in other nations.

At the moment ROTNAC consists of 12 members, mostly centres from Western Europe. Members are national centres providing central services to all kinds of libraries.

But what is central service? Central service consists of those activities which comprise or should comprise the actual basic tasks of every library, but which are carried out nationally for the sake of improving quality and efficiency. Thus, central service provides materials to support libraries in carrying out the following basic tasks, for example:

- acquisition, storage, retrieval and processing of books and other information materials
- lending information materials
- providing guidance to the readers in searching for and selecting information materials.

In these fields of activity numerous offers are made to libraries, both in the form of publications from the suppliers of library furniture or the supply of library furniture and equipment, and in the form of subscriptions to publications.

The legal form of the central service organization can differ from country to country. For example, in Sweden it is a firm; in the Netherlands it is a part of the library association itself. However, a central service organization must *first* have a distinct connection with the government and/or with libraries or librarians who are able to influence the policy and management of the centre directly. Second, a centre should be self-supporting, but any profit made should not be used for private or personal gain. Also, a completely private firm on a commercial basis is rejected from membership. This is because the commercial aspect might lead to a restriction of service because non-profitable business would not be carried out in that case or would take a second place to profit-making ventures. A national centre has to be a part of the entire library network.

What are the advantages of the national centres?

The benefits of the national centres are particularly significant for reasons of quality and economy. In practice it appears that it is possible for the national centres to hire specialized employees. This does not mean that these employees are better than the librarians in the local public libraries, school libraries or hospital libraries. However, they do have the opportunity for broader orientation and better facilities for cooperation and consultation with those who are directly involved in local library work.

This brings about a pooling of knowledge including that of provisions existing in the country at the local and provincial levels. Furthermore, reliable information on quality can be disseminated in writing or in meetings with other persons professionally interested in library work.

Economic benefits are also quite large. The activities performed centrally (or which can be done centrally) include savings on manpower, but also savings on materials, printing costs, etc.

Through central service many working costs are saved. Where many others do the same work, the work can be duplicated and distributed by few persons. In the Netherlands it has been computed that per year for school libraries, hospital libraries and public libraries together, a saving of approximately Dfl 200,000,000 (or US $ 60,000,000) is realized. Another way of saving this is that the price that one must pay to a central service organization is only 10 per cent of the personnel cost that one would have if this work were done exclusively in each library. With this saving in working hours, many other tasks could be performed including those in the sphere of information and help for users. In a number of cases activities, also for library work for the disabled, could not even be started without the cooperation of a national centre. And as you know, a restriction of activities will occur even more often in the future because of the economic situation.

The special service for the disabled

In 1978 a ROTNAC Working Group had a first meeting in Oslo to talk about books for handicapped people.

From that a wider engagement in some centres was started regarding book, bibliographic and technical aids.

Now before I am going to say something about what a national centre can do for library work for the disabled, I have to apologize for the fact that perhaps I shall talk too much about the Dutch situation.

I only have information of my own centre and the centres in Norway, Finland and Denmark.

The development of a central service for the disabled indeed can, in my opinion, only be started properly if there is a direct, permanent and structural contact between the professional workers active in this field and the central service organization. I shall give you three examples:

In Norway there is cooperation between the centre and the organizations for the handicapped, and the State Directorate.

In Denmark there is close cooperation with the State Library for the Blind.

In Sweden the centre cooperates with the county councils responsible for health care, the Swedish institutions and associations for disabled persons and the Swedish Library of Talking Books.

Because the Dutch Centre for Public Libraries and Literature (NBLC) is in the first place a library association with a section for library work for the disabled, there exists, so to say, a natural relation with that part of the NBLC providing for central service.

Indeed, for instance, it was that section for library work for the disabled which required attention for literature provision for the mentally handicapped in 1977.

The NBLC appointed a Committee of experts, which reported on what should be done in this field.Its most significant recommendation was that the NBLC should stimulate an adapted supply of books and book materials in the Netherlands.

First of all, after the NBLC had appointed a special officer, criteria were laid down for material for the mentally handicapped. Afterwards, the attention of authors, illustrators and photographers was drawn to these criteria.

Then discussions were held with a number of publishers in order to persuade them to publish books for this group. These were quite a few discussions.

Moreover, a publicity campaign was held by the NBLC, a broad market exploration took place and the NBLC published a number of photo exercise books in order to show the gaps in the market and their commercial attainableness.

I have taken some photo exercise books with me.

Now, after three years, approximately 70 titles have been published, which intentionally meet the criteria.

A special NBLC Working Group advises on the publications as well as on their illustrations, type-page and letter-type.

If a title to be published meets the criteria, then the NBLC allocates to this title the hall-mark "Easy to read", which is put on the book.
The hall-mark is also a distinguishing mark. The book can be found back in spite of separate placing.
Authors were encouraged to submit texts through a special prize competition on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the NBLC. The three awarded titles were published in the meantime.
After the titles had entered the market, the reactions became a reason to adapt the criteria again and again.
Two new aspects emerged here:

a) gradually, more insight was developed into the special criteria for the audiovisual media
b) the hall-mark "Easy to read" could be interpreted in a broader sense, because these books, which are written in simple language and yet interesting for older age-groups, were interesting and useful to various target groups.

At the same time an extensive study was made of the criteria for books for deaf children, in the framework of the Unesco Year of the Handicapped.
This report was published in 1982 and, just like the one for the mentally handicapped, resulted in a series of adapted books.
Often the books published sometimes prove to be useful for both target groups, but sometimes also for children without reading problems, without a handicap being the cause for this. These include, for instance, also the immigrants.
In the ordinary book offers of all centres to the librarios there is an offer for large print books and talking books.
Other activities for this group of disabled readers:

- production and distribution of audioslide series with the photo exercise books (as I just showed one to you), but also translated texts in Arabic and Turkish for immigrants and a simple computer programme for the micro computer at schools
- composition and distribution by all centres of annual selected lists of references, such as:
  1. lists for the mentally handicapped
  2. lists for children and for adults with reading problems
  3. lists for deaf children
  4. lists of talking books, from which in Denmark also a recorded version is published

5. guides for parents to books dealing with the handicap of their children

- in the Netherlands a talking periodical for mentally handicapped will be distributed next month, and at this moment a consultation is taking place on the possibility of a self-written periodical for mentally handicapped
- guidance of librarians through study days, lectures at the library schools and work visits, and the maintenance of a show collection of selected titles and organization of exhibitions on the subject.

There was also the set-up of central research work, review, central supply and preparation for loan of specific material such as puzzles, talking records, photo-language quartettes. The first offer was made to the libraries some time ago.

Finally, a pamphlet was published particularly for this target group on how it can make use of the public library.

Also for other target groups there are quite a few activities.

- Hospital libraries can make use of the service of the centres and will do so.
- Special book trolleys were designed for hospital libraries.

In the Netherlands a show collection of reading aids for visually handicapped was set up, and an explanatory slide series on the subject was offered to the libraries.

In Norway the centre started a survey of reading aids. A catalogue was produced with suitable lamps, magnifying glasses, cassette players for talking books, special booksupports, etc.

A same selection will be offered soon by the centre in Finland.

In Denmark the centre was the first publisher of talking books in coordination with the State Library for the Blind. These talking books can only be borrowed by persons who are prevented from reading books because of some kind of handicap, so not only for blind people. Several hundreds of titles are now available. Recently, a same arrangement was made in the Netherlands.

In Sweden the centre developed a special box for the talking books which simplifies the mailing.

Advice is given with regard to the accessibility of library buildings for the handicapped.

In most countries an annual catalogue is published of all large print books available in their own country, and a larger and, particularly, also wider supply of titles is stimulated.

Finally, in the Netherlands two officers take care of the content work, one of them particularly active in the field of provisions and materials for the handicapped, and the other acting as secretary to the section for library work for the disabled, counting the work for the sick and elderly handicapped among her sphere of action as well.

For the workers at the local level a three-monthly Infobulletin is published and study days are organized.

Moreover, and this is important, gradual integration is taking place in the other work of the NBLC in the field of books, AVM, information, promotion of expertise and children's literature, of this special work into the general work.

For instance, by means of articles in the professional journal an effort is made to provide information to all librarians.

I hope that I have given you a broad insight into what a national centre can do for library work for the disabled.

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IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Libraries serving the General Public

Section: Library Services to Hospital Patients and Handicapped Readers

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Guidelines for libraries serving hospital patients and disabled people in the community - a tool to improve the library service.

by

Gunnar WESTGARD, Library Adviser within the Norwegian Directorate for Public and School Libraries.

and

Bjørg HEIE, Norwegian Directorate for Public and School Libraries.

GUIDELINES FOR LIBRARIES SERVING HOSPITAL PATIENTS AND DISABLED PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY - A TOOL TO IMPROVE LIBRARY SERVICE

The IFLA Section of Library Services to Hospital Patients and Handicapped Readers has been concerned with standards for a number of years. The first published document was in French in Libri 10 (2) 1960 141-6, with an English abstract in Hospital Abstracts 1961/1063. Then from 1965 further work was undertaken and 'IFLA standards for libraries in hospitals (general service)' published in Unesco Bulletin for Libraries Vol XXIII No. 2 March/April 1969 70-5.

The additional interests of the Section were covered in paragraphs 53-61 of the IFLA Public Libraries Section Standards for Public Libraries published by Verlag Dokumentation in 1973, in which not only services to hospitals were included but also those to housebound readers; the visually handicapped, including the blind; day centres, clubs and residential homes for the elderly; prisons, remand homes and detention centres. As these interests were dealt with in the overall context of the public library service the coverage was, of necessity, brief.

The question of updating the standards and widening their scope was raised at IFLA meetings in Brussels in 1977, and a paper on the subject was presented by Jean Clarke in Strbske Pleso, 1978. At the meeting a resolution was passed to set up a Working Group to revise the standards.

The Working Group was composed by members from The United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and Norway, and with Hospital Librarian Jean Clarke, United Kingdom, as chairman.

At its first meeting the Working Group realized it was not possible to draw up exact standards. It was therefore agreed that Guidelines, based on the experience of a number of librarians in the field, and taking into account the work already done by a number of national library associations, would be more helpful.

The results from the work in the group are now available. They have been published in the new series of IFLA Professional Reports, 2. Worth noticing is also issue No. 1 in this series: Books for the mentally handicapped: A guide to selection.

On account of the composition of the group which also reflects the composition of the Section, it is natural that the guidelines should reflect conditions within West European public library tradition. The Working Group has all the time been aware of this fact. Thus the Guidelines point out the essential features of services to disabled people and suggest alternative ways of setting up services according to local conditions, as there is no one pattern suitable for all countries. It is hoped that this flexible approach will be helpful both in developed and developing countries, enabling them to adapt the Guidelines according to local conditions whether financial, geographical or social.

The Working Group's and the Section's aim in drawing up these Guidelines is not that the services described should be copied but that they should serve as an aid and as exmaples of how the services may be developed. The Working Group sees it as particularly important that the right of everyone to an equal, if not identical, library service is emphasized. Moreover, that it is focussed that there in all public libraries is a need for material adapted to the requirements of the various groups of users, such as talking books, books in large print or easy-readers for all age groups.

It is therefore natural that one should find at the beginning the following quotation from The Unesco Public Library Manifesto:

> "There is increasing concern with the welfare of the elderly and all handicapped people. Problems of loneliness, and mental and physical handicaps of all kinds can be alleviated in many ways by the Public Library.
>
> Improved means of access, provision of mechanical reading aids, books in large print and recorded on tape, service to hospitals and institutions and personal service to the home are some of the ways in which the Public Library can extend its services to those who need it most."

The Working Group states the following about the organization of library services to disabled people.

Needs and objectives

Libraries should aim to serve all groups of the population however specialized their needs. Reading is one of the few recreations available to hospital patients and disabled people in the community. It is very important to stimulate the minds of those who are unable to lead a normal life because of their disability and this is especially so for those who are long-term residents in hospitals and institutions. The therapy of reading can play a vital role in the rehabilitative process. The educational needs of disabled people, wherever they live, must not be overlooked.

Some disabled people may be able to visit the library and once there may need help from the library staff and/or special materials. Other people, with a temporary or permanent disability, may never be able to visit a library and therefore require special library services in their own home, or in a hospital or institution; such services can help to overcome feelings of isolation. These people can vary in age, (from very young children to elderly people), in background and circumstance.

There are some who may have difficulties in reading and therefore need special consideration. Some difficulties may be due to visual handicap, deafness, mental handicap, mental illness (of a temporary or permanent nature), aphasia, etc. Other people may have a motor handicap and be unable to hold a book or turn a page. Finally there are those from whom reading itself is the handicap, e.g., dyslexics and people unaccustomed to reading. Together these disability groups constitute a considerable part of the population and should be given more attention by public libraries.

Materials and equipment

Books in large print, books suitable for those with reading problems and books with specially adapted contents should be available from all public libraries. Far too few books in these categories are published and public libraries should use their influence and governments give subsidies, where possible, to encourage publishers to produce this material.

Talking books, recorded especially for blind people (and in some countries available to disabled people as well) and commercially produced spoken word cassettes should be made available to blind and disabled people who may make better use of literature in this way. Ideally all relevant titles should be issued in this way. Public libraries should hold tapes and cassettes and co-operate with national and local agencies providing talking books and other AV material. The same should apply to books in Braille and books recorded on videotape for deaf groups and other groups with language difficulties. The material referred to should be made available free of charge.

Publications which are particularly suitable for these purposes, in whatever media, should be given greater publicity by means of lists, available in all public libraries; ideally the lists should be available on tape and in Braille. The same should apply to lists of reading aids. It is recommended that public libraries provide simple reading aids for demonstration and use on the premises.

In some authorities the library service is responsible for making reading aids available for those with registered disabilities.

Libraries should be aware of developments in more complex reading aids for blind and deaf people and be prepared to experiment in the installation of such aids in libraries. taking the advice of national and local agencies. Library staff should also be able to give advice on the acquisition of reading aids and on the availability of funds to assist disabled people to purchase and hire them.

Ideally library premises should be so located and designed that disabled people, including those using wheelchairs, can make full use of them without assistance or difficulty. Insofar as finances allow, buildings should have wide passageways, shelving not higher than five shelves, clear guiding, labelling and lighting, tactile marking (including a plan of the lay-out of the library), 'deaf loop' system for hearing aid users, coloured lines painted on the floor to indicate main traffic routes, etc.

What is mentioned here must be important objectives to all public library activity. But despite the efforts that are made there will always be some who fall outside the services that are connected directly with the public library, not as an institution but as premises. It is therefore important with alternative solutions to visiting the library yourself. Here the outreach library service comes in, library service to housebound elderly and disabled people, in institutions for the elderly and in all types of health institutions.

Guidelines have been drawn up and also requirements which must be fulfilled in order that these services which are being developed outside the public libraries themselves, but under the direction of the public libraries and within the public library system, can be said to be satisfactory.

Guidelines are given for size of staff, for books and other material, and for premises. As mentioned at the beginning the guidelines are based on the experiences of the members of the Working Group and on standards in this field from some countries.

The guidelines recommend that a hospital with 400-500 beds and a staff of probably between 700-1000 should aim to build up a stock of 4000-5000 volumes (including AV material). Smaller hospitals, e.g., 200-300 beds would need approximately 2000-3000 volumes. The stock in hospitals with children's beds should be larger as children's reading requirements are greater than those of adults.

When setting up guidelines for staff sizes the Working Group operates with different types of hospitals.
Acute hospitals with 400-500 beds require at least one full-time librarian plus full-time clerical help. These guidelines are based on minimum service including lending of books and one visit per week with a library trolley to the wards.

More staff will be required if the service is to be developed to a level including two visits with a library trolley per week, the provision of talking books, music and other AV materials and planning cultural activities. Children should as far as possible be served by specially trained staff. The library should be open for a minimum of three hours each day. As to institutions where most of the patients are not confined to bed the library should be open daily as many hours as possible.

In hospitals where the general library is integrated with the medical library there is still a need for the same number of library staff hours for the service to patients. Written agreements should ensure this.

Long-stay and specialist hospitals and institutions require a well developed library service including provision of AV materials and cultural activities. These activities are time consuming and therefore the aim should be one librarian for approximately 300 beds plus full-time clerical help. Examples of long-stay and specialist hospitals and institutions are psychiatric, mental handicap, orthopaedic, neurological and tuberculosis hospitals and institutions.

It is of fundamental importance that the general library should not only serve the patients but also the staff. No other method can promote the understanding for the value of the library service.

The general library should be located centrally close to shop and information counter and easy to visit also for up-patients.

The design of the library should provide both for reader privacy as well as social interaction. Bookstacks should not have more than 4-5 shelves, the bottom shelf located not lower than 30 cm above floor level to allow selection also for readers in wheelchairs. The distance between stacks should be a minimum of 1.6 m.

There should be suitable reading and listening areas both for individuals and for groups. In psychiatric hospitals where most of the patients are not confined to their beds these areas are of particular importance.
A library serving 500 beds needs 15 to 20 reading places.
If the hospital has beds for children part of the library should provide for their needs.

In addition to functions estimated for patients space is needed for library counter, storage space for books and other materials, space for technical equipment, reading aids and library trolleys. Furthermore space is needed for the library staff, the working space per head of staff (or full-time equivalents) should be at least 10 sq. metres.

In small hospitals with up to 100 beds adequate space to shelve books and other materials must be provided, which gives the users access to the collections. Storage space is needed for library trolleys, technical equipment etc. Minimum size of the storage room should be 15 sq. metres.

Library services to the disabled in the community

By provision of a personal service to the home, children and adults suffering from handicapped mobility can share in the library's resources. Due to social change library services to the housebound will increase steadily in many countries because of the tendency to encourage the elderly and the disabled to live in their own homes as long as possible.

If may often be difficult to reach all housebound elderly and disabled persons who need outreach library service. Many persons who have been frequent users of the public libraries for a number of years will naturally come to this service as illness occurs and their strength declines, but also persons who have not previously been library users may get pleasure from such service.

Information about the housebound service is of great significance. The public library should inform those attending the housebound, including homehelps, doctors, district nurses as well as through local newspapers, pamphlets etc., about the existence of its services.

A professional service is very important when one cannot oneself visit the library any longer.
By registration a librarian should visit the housebound reader to learn to know wishes and sphere of interest as well as special needs for books in large print, adapted material etc. The further providing of materials should be the responsibility of a librarian, whereas deliveries could be made of some other person. The guidelines recommend that deliveries take place at least once every four weeks with no reasonable limit to the number of books to the user.

Bibliographical aids such as selection lists and lists of new acquisitions to the public library should be available to the user. By a system of telephoning or by using requisition forms each user should be able to make his own selection of titles.

It is necessary to build up a lending system to prevent the same titles from going to the same user twice. The guidelines state that housebound reader service is very staff demanding and time consuming as well as regards librarian, clerical help and deliveries.
Local circumstances and geographical conditions influence the service to such a degree that it is not possible to set up guidelines for size of staff.

Residential homes and institutions

Occupants of residential homes and institutions should have free access to deposit collections from the public library. Depending on the number of inhabitants library shelves or a room should be required for the purpose, centrally placed in the institution. In larger homes a librarian should regularly, probably every fortnight, be present for lending of materials as well as for visiting occupants unable to leave their rooms, with a library trolley.

For homes with less than 30 occupants the guidelines recommend that there should still be a deposit collection changed regularly and an individual request service. This service could be complemented by a service to housebound readers where individuals require it and for which there are fewer than six readers.

As regards day centres and clubs they should have a deposit collection of books exchanged on a regular basis. If possible a librarian should visit the establishments regularly.

Wherever possible a central bookstock is needed to provide deposit collections based on the requirements of the users in the individual establishment. In terms of books per head there should be 3 - 6 books per head with a minimum of 300 volumes. To prevent books from going to the same establishment twice it is necessary to build up an administrative scheme.

Education and training

The guidelines stress that all education for public librarians should include information on the various reasons for reading handicaps so that librarians are knowledgeable about the special demands which different kinds of handicap make on public library service.
Specific education and training should be included in all training for librarians working in this type of library service.

Just as important as the need for everybody who works in public libraries to be knowledgeable about library service to disabled people and about adapted literature, reading aids etc., it is that all library service to the elderly and disabled persons should be connected with the public library.

Patients/clients in health institutions, housebound elderly and disabled people have the same right to professional service as everybody else. They also have the same right to an abundant supply of material as everybody else. Often one will find oneself in situations where traditional library material is insufficient. It is then important to be able to provide alternative offers, pictures for the walls above the hospital bed or music one can listen to. Such material is of significance to weak clients who cannot read books any longer, and is thus more legitimate in the libraries of the health institutions than in the rest of the public libraries. An equal offer does not necessarily mean an identical offer but will rather mean an offer adapted to the needs of the individual.

If the public library and the health institution are run by different authorities, the authority responsible for the running of the health institution must pay for the services rendered the health institution by the public library.

It is important to establish such principles, so that the service does not break down on account of lack of agreements or financial basis. The hospital libraries could of course also be independent institutions, but there must always be a connection with the rest of the libraries so that they are able to draw on common resources of material.

Finally it is important in this lecture to emphasize the significance of providing an offer to weak groups in the community, those who often have abundant leisure time but who lack something with which to fill up that time. Why should those who are well and healthy, the clever and successful be given everything first? Is it right that one should first build up the ordinary offer of library services, and then leave services to disabled people and those who are confined to institutions to come as something additional - something to come if one can afford it?

And, right at the end:

It may prove difficult to participate in the community and achieve equality if one cannot make use of ordinary printed material on account of some kind of disability.
The public library must take on the responsibility for the provision of information in such form that as many as possible may draw on their resources. There is today only a limited offer of material adapted for disabled persons. Technical innovations should be utilized to provide as equal an offer as possible. In the years to come it is to be expected that alternative media both in the field of information and in the field of literature will enable the public libraries to provide these groups with a much broader offer than today.

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Division: Libraries serving the General Public

Section: Libraries serving Disadvantaged Persons.

Public Library Services to the Disabled - their information needs and special materials

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PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE DISABLED THEIR INFORMATION NEEDS AND SPECIAL MATERIALS

ABSTRACT

Studies of information needs of library users have hardly resulted into any meaningful results so far. Yet it is the information needs that are supposed to form a base upon which Library systems and services can be developed. The studies that have been carried out have mainly concentrated on "demands" rather than "needs". Such needs have hardly been established for the disabled especially the hearing and visually impaired who are the subject of discussion in this paper.

The paper identifies three categories of information needs. These include:

the core;
pheripheral;
and the daily living skills for these groups

of users. The last one is particularly useful because it is that information that will help them to adapt in the society so that they can live like other able bodied members of the community. The core cuts across all library clients according to their political, economic, and cultural background; levels of education, professions etc. The pheripheral ones are those that buttresses the core. The important point here is that all needs are dynamic.

To be able to serve the above needs the paper identifies special types of materials that may be used as information carriers in a form that is convenient for these groups of users. These materials have been categorised as follows:

(1) The Tactile
(2) Aural
(3) Visual.

The usefulness of these special materials in giving library service to the hearing and visually impaired in the developing countries have been discussed.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE DISABLED - THEIR INFORMATION NEEDS AND SPECIAL MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

Library services to the disabled and particularly the visually and hearing impaired in the developing countries is inadequately developed. Indeed no serious concern has been expressed in this area. While this is so, we know the population of these groups continues to increase. It is estimated that there are about 42.2 million blind persons in the world today. This figure is obviously conservative. Out of the total Kenya population 27 per cent has defective vision and 16 per cent has defective hearing. The majority of these people are also illiterate. The Public Library Service gives no Library Service at all to these groups.

INFORMATION NEEDS FOR THE VISUALLY AND HEARING IMPAIRED

One information specialist observed that the concept of information 'needs' is vague and abstract. Having concurred with that author we would like to say that it is difficult to provide an operational definition of that term. He went further to say that:

> Investigations that set out to determine information needs as such place themselves at a tremendous disadvantage from the start compared with the investigations that attempt to measure the more tangible aspects of information and user requirements. (Brittain, 1970 p. 60)

Probably this is the position this paper has placed the authors.

However difficult such investigations may be there is a general consensus among the professionals that knowledge on information needs of a given category or categories of users would form a strong basis upon which service could be based. Unfortunately little headway has been made in this area especially for the hearing and visually impaired. Even such areas as aspects of information used by these groups which would probably give a basis for further studies of their needs is far from starting off.

While it is that difficult to study needs, there is a general confusion between "needs" and "demands". Demands can be seen to be vocal or written requests made to a Library. In some instances demands are seen as synonymous with needs. Most of the needs are inarticulated hence can be looked at as those that are yet to be translated to demands. Indeed we are saying here that demands are articulated needs. Menzel (1967) suggested that information needs are not synonymous with demands or the conscious wants of information users. It is not the information that people are aware of that counts but the information that is good for them.

For the purpose of this paper we are considering demands to be subsumed within needs. Consequently needs will be both the intended or identified and unidentified.

In terms of the information needs for the hearing and visually handicapped we know from the literature that little has been done if any. Librarians especially in the developing countries are yet to recognize the need to serve this clientele for even libraries themselves are yet to be developed. In addition most of the librarians see them as special and different from the rest of the community. At the same time they see themselves as incompetent to meet those needs and of course make little effort towards preparing themselves for that purpose. Yet we know that these groups of clientele are only different from the rest of the community only as long as they require information in a different format.

Otherwise, they have a lot of common information needs with the rest of the members of the Society. In addition to those common needs they also require information about their handicap. Such infomration is also required by those without such a handicap but have interest in it. As far as the common interests are concerned the ALA standards for library services for blind and visually handicapped state:

> Blind readers the majority of whom live in normal community settings (my underlining) require library service in a multitude of ways - as children becoming acquainted with a childs world:
> as student in a school;
> as persons learning a trade or profession in order to make a living;
> as citizens and voters who need to be informed;
> as children and adults who have leisure time to fill; and
> finally but by no means least as people who need the guidance, the stimulation and the satisfaction that reading can bring.

The "normal community settings" (underlined above) refers to the fact that these group's needs are only special in that alternative formats to conventional print must be provided for the blind. Otherwise the deaf would want to use print from sound produced materials. This conclusion concurs with a tentative report of a research carried out in this area by the authors of this paper here in Kenya.

The common information needs between the groups under discussion in this paper and the rest of the community can be looked at in two ways:

1. There are those needs that are core to every individual without which he cannot competently perform his tasks or duties. This is what we would refer to as the Central Core of Information for those with hearing or visual impairments or not.

Usually it is quite difficult to identify these needs because we tend to rely on demands. Even the research that have been carried out in this area have ended up giving the demands and not the needs. The main problem here is the use of the wrong method to investigate the needs and the nature of the needs themselves. Thus Muya (1979) suggests that the only way the needs for the clientele can be collected is by what he referred to as "task analysis" supplemented with the survey methods. But caution is needed here because individual's 'tasks' changes in time and consequently the need for constant review. Thus by using this analysis we will get the Core needs at any one given time.

2. Around that core there is a large ill-defined area which may not be technical in respect to ones profession but acquired either through informal and formal methods. Such information may be quite useful at the stage where an idea is being crystallized.

These ill-defined information needs have the role of buttressing the core needs. These two categories are basic to both hearing and the visually impaired. The two could also be considered as basic to those without those impairments. However for those with those impairments the core needs could be expanded to include their needs for information in daily living skills area.

The daily living skills should include all that information that helps the handicapped to adapt effectively in the community in which he lives. So the information required in this case should enhance independent living. This aspect of information is so vital to professionals or non-professionals because it makes them independent as any other member of the community, for example, the communication and interactions skills. Such skills are common to both men and women. However there are certain skills that are relevant to women or to men. For instance women need information on how to prepare food, knitting for children, serving others in the house, furniture arrangement, matching colours etc. Men may need information on how to fix doors, clearing the compounds, budgeting etc.

Orientation and mobility is basic also for the visually handicapped. This is essential information and alot of other activities may be hinged on this. The hearing impaired would definitely need to know how to read sign language.

Careers open to these groups and other professional information is vital for as we are aware these people are often refused jobs because of their disability. This of course goes along with such information about the educational opportunities and scholarships in a country like Kenya due to scarcity of secondary school facilities for both the hearing and the visually impaired information on the secondary school opportunities, technical or professional opportunities leave alone the tertiary would be indispensable to them. In a summary statement, Dr. Ndurumo who is himself deaf wrote that:

> We need information relating to deafness, deaf people, biographies and autobiographies of deaf people, information on further education in other countries, organizations, clubs of (and for) the deaf, legal matters relating to the deaf, story books by deaf people on deaf people etc.

He went further to comment on the kind of Library service he would like to see given to the hearing impaired as:

> Overall - deaf people do not differ from hearing people on the Library Services... however if you can find books written in clear and concise language, the better. The problem with the deaf is mainly language.

In serving the visually or the hearing impaired persons understanding their information needs would be prerequisite to any relevant service. Those needs are seen in 3 ways relevant service. There is the core needs and around that are pheripheral ones. Over and above these two are the daily living skills information needs for the handicapped.

PROBLEMS OF PRINT HANDICAPS

Fundamental problems in most developing countries connected with special reading materials for the disabled are non-availability of resources, rampant illiteracy among the disabled and to a large extent non-financial commitment to such projects.

Reproduction of books into a medium usable by the print handicapped is restricted in principle by the copyright laws, though authors and publishers often grant permission. International interlending does not always deal in cassettes. The use of electronic detecting equipment at the customs could be hindering factor. Braille libraries abroad which give an international service have not transcribed the books needed by developing countries, for example, Africana oriented publications.

Braille grade one could be used in any country but the diversity of ethnic languages and high degree of illiteracy among the visually handicapped inhibit its use. Talking books are much easier and cheaper to produce than transcribing the same copy into braille. Unfortunately the hearing impaired cannot be able to use the recorded materials besides, ownership and maintenance of the cassette playbacks is beyond the economic means of the poor disabled. Public library services in developing countries have yet to attempt installing special reading facilities for the disabled user. The possible reaction is not easy to presuppose but with enough publicity the response could be positive.

The world economic recession hits the library most. If there were services that would have financial allocation cut, the library normally gets the axe first. Librarians in developing countries tend to overlook the disabled part of the population when making the library policies. Hence the consequent policies developed do not cover library services to this group.

NEED FOR SPECIAL MATERIALS

The disabled persons need information in order to function effectively and independently in the community. They need information related to academic and professional activities. They also need to be supplied with information in areas which may make them come to terms with their handicaps.

Information is readily available in print format. For the print handicap, print information is not useful until a device to translate it to an acceptable medium is available. The same way recorded information is not usable by hearing impaired until it is translated into visual communication medium. In most of developing countries the majority of the disabled are illiterate. The hearing impaired who may not have developed some language or speech skills will not be able to use print. Persons who are temporary or permanently disabled either by accident or by illness or patients having side effects of treatment drugs will need special reading materials. In supportof this thesis, Ensley (1980) writes that:

> 'There are persons who because of physical handicap cannot read conventional print, and to provide reading and information for this part of the population, libraries must provide reading and information in adopted format which can be utilized by the print handicapped persons.'

It is therefore the responsibility of the public library to provide reading and information in a format usable by the disabled persons.

Formats for non-print and reading aids

Special formats are synonymous with the visually handicapped. This is probably so because print reading culture is a visual activity. And persons who deviate from this norm because of visual handicap would need reading in a special format. We shall discuss the trio format used by the disabled and illustrating each case by an example. These formats which are either directly used or equipment aided are TACTILE-AURAL - VISUAL (TAV).

(a) Tactile

(i) Braille

Public libraries for the blind are different from other public libraries in that they are not only repository for published braille books, but they are also in business of their production, writes Kitagawa. Braille books are not anywhere close to the print books published. This therefore does not avail on the shelves a copy of any title a user needs at the time he needs it. This factor therefore forces the library for the blind to take requests from the clients and transcribe her own copies for her clients. The same copies may later be availed on interlibrary loan should need arise.

In Kenya for example, the required school texts are produced locally in the schools for the blind. Michael Rich a headmaster of the only high school for the blind at Thika once wrote in a local newspaper that "teachers in this school had to cope with as little as only the reading materials which they themselves makes". There are two braille presses in Kenya at Sikri in South Nyanza and Hadley in Nairobi but their production cannot meet the school demand in the country. Hadley correspondence school for the Blind in Nairobi is a regional branch of the Hadley in the United States of America. It serves the whole of African English speaking countries by posting books for distance education. Both presses can only supplement the individual schools production. International Interlending goes on in institutions of higher learning where materials studies are of the same level. Individuals blind readers can become members of Royal National Institute for the Blind but Africana books that may appeal to Africans mainly fiction have not been transcribed and hence their needs remain unattended.

(ii) Optical - to tactile - converter (Optacon)

Visually handicapped persons can independently use print by means of electronics. Optacon is a device which converts images of print letters, including handwritten into tactile format which can be felt with fingers. Optacon is capable of reading different styles, symbols and languages because it merely reproduces what is written in an enlarged vibration. The user has to learn the structures of alphabet before he can be able to read effectively. The biggest setback with this miracle machine is the high costs.

(b) Aural format

(i) Recorded sound

In substituting for the sight, the visually handicapped use their hearing and touching senses to read. Recorded books are slowly coming into bookshops, but individual blind students still take private readers. Ammannto (1977) observes that at certain level of his growth a blind man, since he wants books or cannot take notes rapidly enough, has recourse to records and recording tapes. Thiele (1979) in his paper "formats in non-print media for the blind and the visually handicapped," sees the talking book as a modern electronic link to our aural tradition of communication. He adds that it allows a blind person to gain information without the process of decoding tactile or any other print. Useful variable reading speed playbacks are now available on market and users can read at their own speed without distorting the quality of information. Recorded sound needs a third party to read into cassette who may not always be available when needed. Therefore reading the desired material at own time may not always be possible. Sound has been recorded on discs both hard and floppy as well as on cassette tapes and reels.

(ii) Synthesized speech

Synthesized speech equipment give the reader a rare translation service of print into sound. Kurzweil reading machine translates print into synthetic sound. Though the speech has to be learnt, when perfection level is acquired, like optacon, it gives the reader an opportunity to read confidential correspondence like bank accounts etcetra.

Recorded sound can be used in a library service to the whole community except for those with hearing impairment. The profound deaf who cannot hear even with aids in the better ear after correction would require a translation service. And the illiterate in the community, with translation can use recorded sound in ethnic languages. Many useful reading machines have been discovered for the disabled persons unfortunately none of them has been designed with economic capabilities of the disabled in mind especially those from the developing countries.

c. Visual Communication format

(i) Large Print

Large print publications do not have a long history. It is more recent than the sound recording but could just be as popular as recorded sound with the elderly. In Britain, Thorpe of the Ulverscroft went into publishing business by about 1964. There are about the National Library for the Blind in the same country started producing and stocking a collection known as Austin Large Print Collection. The print which is approximately twice the size of normal print can be used by hospital patients. The use of jet black ink in printing gives a blacker effect than in standard book printing. It is the grey effect in ink that defeats the readers even after enlargement with a magnifying glass or in closed circuit television.

(ii) Signed writing

Hearing impaired are educable and therefore can acquire the reading culture of print materials. Their training in language needs to be supported by hearing aids, like hearing loops, and amplifying equipment. The profound deaf cannot use recorded sound even with hearing aids. This therefore makes them require other reading aids. Books written in signed language which have both the text and the signs printed together are preferrable. Sangster (1981) writes in his article, "Library services for the hearing impaired" that "Well illustrated books are most ideal in case of deaf readers, since the illustrations will carry the story with minimum interpretation." A service to the profound deaf would require translation personnel in public libraries. Ritter (1981) writes that "in every case where a library... uses an auditory means of presenting information, this must replaced by visual one." Precisely it means having translation services in public libraries for recorded materials. For those whom the hearing aids can bring into speech range, they should be provided with equipment. Michael and Sandoski sum it all by saying that:

> "better would be specialized materials ranging from slide with audio cassette packages to full video cassette programmes. These are simple handheld and cranked moving film devices available at low cost. The special film and video system which are the best media for the deaf run into hundred of dollars; but well worth it."

CONCLUSION

Public libraries in developing countries are developed according to the directives of the librarians and not necessarily according to the information needs of the communities they are supposed to serve. More often than not they are imposed on the community. The situation is worse with the disabled particularly the hearing and visually impaired whose needs are not always known leave alone being included in the library policies. Pre-service surveys should be carried out to determine the information needs upon which a service could be developed. Thus as much as possible the library services should be relevant. This is only possible if the needs of the clientele are identified. To identify the actual needs the right methods must be used. Once this has been done it is possible to evaluate the library services in future. On the basis of the information collected special materials can be supplied. The policy bodies should in addition include the disabled persons on their boards who would present and represent their interests without proxy.

Governments should have financial commitment to the development of materials and personnel for a service that is geared towards the disabled. However one of the notable things is that most of the special materials are expensive for the developing countries. We still need cheap and usable resources to be developed.

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Producing Braille in Africa

Outlines of a Feasability Study

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distribution only ☐

Introduction

In addition to the traditional subjects of the sience of physics such as "matter" and "energy" nowadays "information" has been added. This reflects the high rank of a phenomenon that builds (in its "materialistic outcome") the basis of a librarians' work.

Information is closely linked to language and here especially in the written form what nowadays mostly stands for print. Oral tradition should not be neglected but doesn't come in the first place when dealing with the transfer of knowledge in a modern society. Even if one takes electronical storage of information into account - for the actual individual use information needs optical or acoustic transfer; for the blind - in addition - the tactual format.

One of the tasks of librarians is to pave the way for a society as well as the personal readers to get them the information that's needed; this is, no doubt about it, part of our work. Only the way how to establish an easy access to the information stored has to be discussed. Furthermore - for the blind people we have to offer the information in a suitable special format i. e. with the help of braille and talking books.

In most developing countries an additional problem has to be solved: illiteracy. So one aspect of the conference theme (The Basis of Library and Information Services for National Development) relates most to our

work: the promotion of reading (habit) and adult education as a basis for social development and integration; and we, as a group of librarians for the blind, will strive to identify inputs to ensure "the establishment and development of viable and effective library and information services" for the visually handicapped. Means to reach this goal are the activities of UNESCO with the support of IFLA - for example (cf. the references given at the end).
First efforts to tackle the question how to serve blind people in the developing parts of Africa best go back as early as to the IFLA 1977 General Conference at Brussels.

Starting in 1978 at the very beginning of the then founded Working Group of the Libraries for the Blind (WGLB) discussions took place aming at finding possibilities to help the blind in developing countries in placing reading materials at their disposal evolving from their own cultural and social environment. Seen for the background of fighting illiteracy braille was the first choice in format. The reasons are manyfold.

Braille is a reading and writing medium (and contrasts to the passivity of listening); it maintains communication; paper-braille may be used everywhere, at any time and directly independant from place, time and costly devices that again at the readers side rely themselves from other conditions (i. e. currency with a talking book playback machine and maintenance of equipment). Braille is - besides all critics - the best (= the only) means towards alphabetization and literacy (as long as it is used in an uncontracted code) and the most comprehensive tool for teaching and selfstudy as well. These advantages only count when a language is based on script (and written/printed material for transcribing is at hand). But this is not valid to all vernaculars ... that build the largest number of the more than one thousand different languages in use throughout the continent, whereof most are spoken by 100000 or fewer people (Mayer/Cylke p. 2). Nevertheless further efforts have concentrate on braille.

A first statistical approach

In 1979 a study was persued by (Marc Mayer and Frank Kurt Cylke from) IFLA for UNESCO (Contract N° 59 45 60) as a first approach and statistical basis. Considering that first and foremost the question has to be solved of whom the project would serve, it was tried to figure the number of the blind in African countries. This is a nearly unsolvable problem since only for a very few nations exact numbers about the population are available, let alone the blind. After discussions with Helen Keller International (HKI) an average percentage between one and five percent was assumed. For the study only one percent has been taken as a conservative estimate. Later publications (cf. Wilson; Research HKI) also could not give exact numbers. But one thing is for sure: even the smallest figure is to low compared to reality. The percentage is much higher than with the industrialized countries. (In Europe the figure is 0,2 %; 75 % of the blind are over 60/65 years of age.) The total world-wide blind population of 42 million is likely to double by the year 2000; three-fourth (at least 35 million) live in developing countries; an ample number thereof in Africa. Cataract, trachoma, xerophtalmia and onchocerciasis/riverblindness are spreading also in Africa and more and more children are inflicted (even from cataract!). The range differs widely from next to nothing at some places up to sometimes 50 % in rural areas. So finally it does not matter what the figures exactly are but that there is an urgent need for help: to make the blind an integrated part of the community.

And it should be no hindrance that at the moment only a minority is able to make use (for example) of braille; certain statistics show a relative higher literacy rate among the blind than among the sighted (Thomsen in Mayer/Cylke p. A 44). Seen on long terms promising efforts have to concentrate on children and the encouring and spreading of braille.

The study furthermore gives information about the frequency of languages. Used at a broader level besides the numerous vernaculars were parent tongues as: French (32 countries), English (28), German (16), Arabic (13), Spanish (6) and Portuguese (5); local languages used most: Bantu, Kiswahili, Africaans (each 4), Swahili (3), to name only a few.

The part of research dealing with cost analysis indicates that press braille is the cheapest method, although a handcopy-system would be the easiest to establish (but less efficient).

Evaluating the total number of 52 nations, three countries as most promising locations for a successful braille production have been proposed. (Highest estimated blind population, literacy rate, per capita income, greatest number of libraries for the sighted; strongest political system.)

The final recommendation was as follows

> "We recommend Tanzania, the Ivory Coast or Kenya as the best possible locations for a central braille facility."
>
> "We further recommend that a committee of African nations make the final selection for a central braille facility based on expertise, willingness and equipment on hand."

The African approach

To come up to the second part of the recommendation UNESCO sponsored a Seminar on Library Service to the Visually Handicapped in Developing Countries. Such a seminar, too, had been considered as one of the WGLB major tasks since its foundation.

Anna Ubostad together with Paulli Thomsen organized this meeting at Arusha/Tanzania (November 3 - 11, 1980). Twelve African countries out of invited fifteen attended (including representatives of the organisations of and for the blind): Cameroon, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Sambia.

All countries used braille, two owned a press (Sambia, Tanzania), the rest thermoform copying machines or braillers only. The language/code used throughout was English braille Grade 2, some places French, in addition (Cameroon) and vernaculars (Kiswahili in Tanzania). Today there are more braille presses in Africa: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone. Furthermore in Northafrica: Algeria, Maroc and Tunesia; in Southafrica: Worcester and Mayfair.

In this group of librarians priority was given to braille as a medium, next to talking books. As target groups were defined first persons attending/working within institutions (schools, training colleges, universities, vocational or rehabilitation centres; secondly those who had formal schooling and found employment (including adult education); third the by far largest group of illiterates. Emphasized was the important role of educating the children and the need not only for textbooks but recreational literature, too.

The statement to the geographical question is clear: Where an easy access to braille material can be asured and goes together with the opportunity to learn to read a book production should be established: i. e. the braille capability should be located where the material is likely to be used.

Book distribution in Africa is still difficult and unreliable, a library network with the possibility of interlibrary loan not existing. The difficulties on local/language level increase if refered to the nation and multiply in respect to a group of countries ... let alone a whole continent. If one takes possible political, cultural, ideological and economical revalries into consideration (to name only a few) the most farreaching centralization will be the most ineffective solution. So the Arusha seminar, attended by experts from the target countries themselves recommended to establish braille facilities in all African nations. (So there was no difficulty to name one or other.) - Special countries, where to encourage braille capabilities first were not given, only that a (with regard to the continent) decentralized system would be preferred; in respect to the different countries, the establishment of central national braille presses should have first priority.

Production is one side of the medal - a suitable distribution the other. So not only the making has to be secured but there also must be an efficient, properly staffed and well financed library system or other reliable infrastructure to make sure an eventual patron really gets the needed reading material, and in a format that he is able to consume.

The Arusha seminar dealt with all library services for the blind - so problems of and with talking books were discussed. There was not doubt about the necessity to offer recorded material to presumptive readers. It was felt that not only a library system has to cope with the problems of producing with a more complicated technology, but the patron himself has to struggle with somewhat sophisticated and hence susceptible devices. Besides reliable playback machines regular supply with batteries or spare parts is undispensable as well as a trustworthy maintenance outside the towns in rural areas.

The talking book was looked at as a supplement to braille material, especially for casual readers, newly blinded elderly or children - people that are not yet capable to use braille; furthermore the talking book might be a means of information transfer with a lot of vernaculars that lack a braille code.

One of the most important recommandations out of the Arusha seminar goes as follows

> "..., priority should be given to those in educational institutions and to braille as a medium. Braille and talking book facilities should, as far as possible, be established in all African countries. We therefore recommend that governments in various African countries, in cooperation with UNESCO, IFLA and other interested agencies, should take the necessary steps to establish braille and talking book production centres producing books and other relevant reading materials in local as well as in foreign languages."

The study under way

UNESCO took up the suggestions and consequently entrusted IFLA with a feasibility study of setting up unit(s) to produce braille editions of books and reading material for visually handicapped children, young people and adults in Africa - in local as well as foreign languages (working title: Producing Braille in Africa).

In discussions this frame was filled with details. Wanted is:

The idea of a continental central production unit has abandoned for the benefit of a nation - orientated model (centralisation per country).

Of course this could not be archieved in one stroke, but step by step. A first task could be the strengthening of some already existing braille presses. Later on they could serve as nucleus for spreading the knowledge of practical every-day-work (organisation of labour, working technics; repair, maintenance; resources for materials). By and by the African nations finally should become more and more independent.

At the time being the equipment could be conventional; the easier to handle and maintain the machines are choosen the more reliable the work can be done and the more autonomous an institution will be. Especially in countries, where man power is easily available a simple and robust equipment will fit best and in addition may give work to visually handicapped persons. Sophisticated technology in producing braille (and talking books) even in industrialized countries cannot always be used in an untroubled process.

(As computer technology is developing in Africa, too, first steps have been made for a computerized production. If there is no capacity of large scale printing at such a place, the digitized "paperless braille"-output can easily be printed from a softcopy at another place. This cooperation has proofed feasable if time (for mailing) does not matter. So some severe problems arising in developing countries could be solved and only such material will be sent that has African origin.)

- a further up-to-the-day-identification of possibilities for braille production,
- detailed investigation of the status quo of the publishing of braille books in the region, including
- inventorization of existing texts;
- capacity of the existing presses should be studied as well as
- their potential for production expansion.
- The availability of materials has also to be considered as
- the existing infrastructures as basic requirements for an endogenous production of braille texts. Further propositions have to be cleared as to
- necessary buildings, staff, training, equipment and material available or needed, including an
- estimate of the costs. The study should take into account (besides
- text books and out-of-school reading materials for children and young people)
- the production of reading for literacy campaigns.

To meet the requests of UNESCO we have mailed by now 205 questionnaires (in braille and ink/English and French) to 137 organisation and institutions including 23 (!) braille producing houses. Until now only 20 answers found their way back. But there is hope - after a reminder has send out - the feedback will increase. At the IFLA Expert Meeting at Amsterdam (prior to this General Conference) a working party was set up, with members from African countries and persons that have worked with the blind in your continent. At the moment it is too early to give results from the incoming material because the basis is too small.

Conclusion

This paper started with the statement that transfer of information is the essential factor in gaining and spreading knowledge. Coming down from the theoretical "clouds" to earth, to the situation being, we could practise this exchange of information here and now.

You could support the study by broadening the basis by filling in the questionnaires you can find here or giving further information and details in the matter concerned. Any hint is welcome and will duely be discussed.

Guide Marks

1. Braille and talking books complement one another.
2. Braille production capabilities as well as recording facilities have proofed to be necessary and
3. services should be centralized per country.
4. Well established African presses should help to develop others on the continent.
5. Braille should be printed for all languages used and whereof braille codes are available (vernaculars and parent tongues).
6. Recorded material should be produced with preference of the local languages and for the illiterate.

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IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Libraries Serving the general public

Section:

PRESENTATION OF THE WORK OF THE SECTION OF LIBRARIES FOR THE BLIND

by

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I INTRODUCTION

At first I want to thank the chairman of the Division, Max Broome for giving us, the youngest Section of the Division of Libraries Serving the General Public, this opportunity of presenting to you an overview of the work we are doing.

Before going into the presentation of the work of the Section of Libraries for the Blind within IFLA, I think it will be useful to give a brief outline of the background to library service for the blind and draw your attention to the difference between our kind of library service and ordinary library service.

II BACKGROUND TO THE LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE BLIND

The difference is based on the specific needs of our users and the main one is the necessity of transcribing information into a medium the blind person can use.
This need has made it necessary for the libraries for the blind not only to collect information like other libraries but also to produce the necessary special editions. This means that apart from all functions of an ordinary library the library for the blind often has to be a production center, too.

Another difference is our users dependency on outreach service. Most blind people are not able to visit the library themselves, therefore all libraries for the blind have based their lending systems mainly on mail service.

The last difference I want to mention is blind peoples lack of choice. What I mean is, that the blind can not go to the bookshop and buy whatever book he/she wants. If the library for the blind for some reason has chosen has not to produce a book - or periodical, or a newspaper for that matter - this information is not available for the blind at all. This difference is the most challenging for all librarians working for the blind. It puts a tremendous responsibility upon us, and an impossible one too as all of us are working under the restrains of limited economic resources (this condition unfortunately is one we share with most of you).

Furthermore books play an even more important role to the blind than they do to the sighted as they often represent a primary form of information intake. To illustrate this allow me to quote Helen Keller, who at the hearings before the United States Congress Library Committee on the Pratt Bill in 1930 said:

"Books are the eyes of the blind. They reveal to us the glories of the light-filled world; they keep us in touch with what people are thinking and doing; they help us forget our limitation."

When I started my presentation I stated that we are the youngest section in this division.

But library service for the blind is not a young phenomenon. As I said before the blind depend on transcriptions into media they can use. Media for the use of blind were invented as early as the fourteenth Century. Examples are known from Arab story. Many other attempts were made, but not until Louis Braille invented his alphabet, did anyone succeed in making an effective and universal way of transcribing printed text into a simple tactile code for the use of the blind.

Louis Braille, himself a blind, published his alphabet in 1829, and in many countries small braille libraries were set up, usually in connection braille production centers, in the years to come.

The next big step forward came in the 1930's where the first books on disc were produced in the United States for the libraries for the blind.

The technique had been available since 1877, when Thomas Edison invented his phonograph. As a curiosity I should like to mention that when Edison applied for a patent for the phonograph one of the ten potential uses he listed was "phonograph books which will speak to blind people without effort on their part." This item was second on his list of ten, "reproduction of music" was fourth.

The realization of this dream had to await the possibilities of mass production fifty years later.
In Scandinavia the new technique was taken into use in the 1950's where the libraries for the blind started production of book on tape.
The talking book - as this new medium was baptized - opened a new era in the library service for the blind.
The talking book could be used without the training all other media for the blind had required and the libraries suddenly reached lots of new potential users.
Illustrative of this I can tell you that in 1955 the Danish Library for the Blind served less than 300 borrowers. Ten years later in 1965 the library served 3,500 borrowers and today less than 20 years later we serve 8,500 borrowers.
I think these figures are important as they clearly demonstrate the revolution the small exclusive braille libraries have experienced in the last 30 years.
And I think it explains our fairly recent need of co-operation with public libraries.

And also it leads us to IFLA.

III LIBRARIES FOR THE BLIND AND IFLA

The story of IFLA and the Libraries for the Blind starts in 1977.

Frank Kurt Cylke, Director, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, U.S.A. took the initiative by making a proposal for International Coordination of Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, which should be discussed at the IFLA conference in Brussels 1977.
In this proposal Kurt Cylke emphasized the need of common technical and service guidelines and stated that IFLA was the organization to serve as the coordinating body, also for libraries for the blind. The reason for choosing an organization of librarians instead of for instance an organization devoted to the wel-

fare of the blind was the recognition of the concept that library service for the handicapped has the same philosophical base as that for non-handicapped.
Kurt Cylke therefore suggested that a Working Group on the coordination of library service for the blind and physically handicapped should be set up within the framework of IFLA.
The tasks of the Working Group should be as follows:

1. The development of an international inventory of library resources;
2. The need for identification of existing production formats;
3. The need for standardization of production formats;
4. The development of an effective international interlibrary loan mechanism; and
5. The need for a coordinated application of existing and future technologies to production requirements.

The working group was established. In 1979 it was turned into a Round Table under the Section of Library Services to Hospital Patients and Handicapped Readers, and in 1983 we became a Section.

You see, we have moved very fast, the reason of course being the enormous need felt among all libraries for the blind of co-operation and co-ordinational at an international level.
Our specific need of co-operation rises from the fact that all libraries for the blind all over the world have got one paramount problem

- the quantity of materials produced in alternate media is never more than a small fraction of the world's publishing output and is inadequate to serve the educational, informational and cultural needs of handicapped readers.

The few resources we have got therefore have to be shared in the most effective way, for instance, through interlending, dissemination of information on new technology, etc.

Thus the major task of the Working Group was to identify areas which obstructed the resource sharing.

The areas identified were

- copyright
- identification of locations of special collections for the blind
- format
- postal law/custom regulations
- bibliographic control

COPYRIGHT

Copyright is an obstacle to the free flow of information in this field, as it can delay, encumber, restrict or even prevent the production and dissemination of alternate media materials.
Consequently one of the first initiatives of the group was to undertake a study on copyright problems. This study was carried out by Francoise Hébert, Director of the Library of Canadian National Institute for the Blind and Wanda Noil, Barrister and Solicitor. The study was published in 1982 as IFLA publication no. 21 and is entitled "Copyright and Library Materials for the Handicapped."

LOCATION OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS FOR THE BLIND

As to the location of special collections for the blind it is obvious, that you have got no possibilities of sharing resources if you do not know where the resources are located.
As so many libraries for the blind were established long time before the public library systems came into existence, they have often not been linked to the official library world. When the Working Group for the blind started its work no registration existed, and it was a natural task for our group to try to bridge this gap.
A study was carried out by Frank Kurt Cylke, Library of Congress and Peter Hanke from the American Foundation for the Blind, New York,

and the result is published this summer "International Directory of Libraries and Production Facilities for the Blind."
Also "International Directory of Braille Music Collections," edited by Suzanne E. Thorin is published this summer. The latter has been prepared in co-operation with the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centers and National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress.

FORMAT

The issue of formats relates to braille as well as to talking books. As to braille the problem is that many nations use contractions when they produce braille materials, and the contractions differ between countries. The result is, that, if for instance a blind German needs a braille text in English, it is necessary for him not only to know English and Braille, but also the specific system of contractions used in England.

Also the problem regarding talking books is the lack of standardization. Recordings on reel tape, disc, cassette exist side by side together with differences in speed and track configurations, all of it requiring different play back equipment. The obstacles for international lending are clear, but certainly very hard to solve, as any change requires money - lots of money.
The main aim of the Section has been to point out the problem, and as to talking books advocate the use of 2 or 4 track cassettes. Many libraries for the blind actually have converted their collections into the recommended formats in the period the group has existed.

POSTAL AND CUSTOM REGULATIONS

Another obstacle for free flow of materials for the handicapped is postal and custom regulations.
The group started work on the issue in 1978. It soon appeared to be a difficult one, as any change implies that the Universal Postal

Union as well as IATA get involved. A subcommittee has been established, and for this conference it has prepared a number of recommendations for action.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

When the group started its work, it recognized the need of proper bibliographic control as the necessary basis for any aspect of improved resource sharing.
In a study from 1977 by Schauder and Cram it was stated that they had found an "almost unbelievable lack of bibliographic tools specifically designed to assist the librarian serving the blind." Already in 1978 a paper was prepared for the Group on this topic by David Schumaker, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, and recommendations and guidelines were published in 1980 by Pieter de Villiers, South Africa and David Schumaker. These recommendations were entitled "International Exchange of Bibliographic Information on Materials for the Blind and Physically Handicapped." Among other things it has recommended that each country should have a National Bibliographic Center for special-format materials, and it was recommended that the International Standard Bibliographic Description for Non-Book Materials (ISBD/NBM) with appropriate additions and interpretations should be used as a standard for bibliographic description of our materials.

In January 1983 the ISBD Review Committee considered the problem of the treatment of microform, Braille and Talking Book versions of text when such versions are considered surrogates for the originals, and a proposal of change was produced. This proposal has been considered by our members, and comments are sent to UBC.
At this conference a Subcommittee on Bibliographic Standards has been established under our Section.

Furthermore the Section has taken up an IFLA study on the tools to improve the availability of Materials for the Blind. The study

is co-ordinated by myself and is carried out by Clifford Law, Library Services for the Handicapped, National Library of Australia and Edwige Mortyr, Library Services of the Norwegian Association of the Blind, Norway.
The study is expected to be finished in 1985.

Our hope is to create more awareness on this specific matter but at the very moment it is so that no country in the world includes book published in media for the blind in their national bibliographies, and no separate national bibliographies for these materials are at present published.

In 1978 the group succeeded in establishing a contract on a Unesco sponsored seminar on Library Service to the Visually Handicapped in African Developing Countries. Anna Ubostad at that time Director of the Library Services of the Norwegian Association of the Blind, Norway and Paulli Thomsen, Student Counsellor, Students Library, Institute for the Blind, Copenhagen organized the Seminar.
This Unesco/IFLA Seminar took place in Arusha, Tanzania in November 1980. 24 representatives from 15 African Countries attended the Seminar, and a final report was published by Unesco in 1981.

Another result of our involvement in library service to the blind and physically handicapped in developing countries is a publication entitled "A Guide to Developing Braille and Talking Book Service," edited by Leslie Clark. The book is especially aimed at developing countries, and it will be published as an IFLA publication this year.
The last project I am going to mention is a project on establishing Braille production facilities in Africa. Rainer Witte, Deutsche Blinden Studienanstalt, Federal Republic of Germany has taken on this Unesco study.
If you are interested in learning more about these three projects regarding various aspects of library service for the blind in African developing countries you are welcome to attend our Sections open meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday where Paulli Thomsen will present a paper on Library Service to Visually Handicapped in

African Developing Countries, Edwige Mortyr will present the Guide to Developing Braille and Talking Book Service, and Rainer Witte will inform of the Braille production project.

You see, we have been working on a variety of topics more or less at the same time.
As a result of that we have experienced that the time available in the IFLA conferences was not sufficient for us to cover as much work as we wanted.
Therefore our group arranged a so-called Expert Meeting in 1983 in Marburg prior to the conference in Munich. This meeting was a great success, and the Section consequently decided - and this decision was approved by IFLA - to follow up the success again this year.
An Expert Meeting was held in Amsterdam last week with 62 participants from 19 countries. The subjects discussed at the meeting were computerized braille production, compact audio disc and talking book production, and the role of national libraries in the library service for the handicapped.
IFLA Headquarters will receive a full set of the ten papers given at the meeting.

I realize that time will not permit me to go into many more details. Allow me just to reel off a few more of the topics we are involved in

- the network of library services to handicapped
- automation of libraries for the blind
- new technology in the production of materials for the handicapped
- standards for library services for the blind and physically handicapped
- co-operation with other library systems

And still I have not paid full justice to all the activities which have taken place in our Working Group/Round Table/Section in the past seven years.

Let me sum it all up in the main objectives of the Section of Libraries for the Blind as they will appear in the Medium - Term - Programme 1986 - 1991:

> The main objectives of the Section of Libraries for the Blind are to promote national and international co-operation in the field of library services for the blind, to encourage research and development in all aspects of this Area, thus improving the availability of materials for the blind and visually handicapped.
> To achieve these goals the Section of Libraries for the Blind is concerned with implementation of service goals, standardization of materials, problems of copyright, bibliographic control of materials for the blind, the relaxation of postal regulations and customs law on such materials, and the identification of the locations of special collections for the blind.

I will finish by quoting Article 27, Paragraph 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

> "Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and share in scientific advancement and its benefits."

In 1979 in Copenhagen a resolution was passed by our Round Table supporting this declaration.

Furthermore the resolution stated that any regulations, practices and procedures which prevent or delay handicapped people from reading materials in alternate media are discriminatory and a violation of the basis human right of free access to public information.

The resolution was aimed at copyright, but covers most of the other aspects we are dealing with.

We have still got a long way to go before we get even close to the aim of giving blind people access to information on equal terms with the sighted, and before that goal is reached there is no such thing as equal opportunities for the blind.

Therefore we intend to go on; step by step bridging the gap. Should we ever reach our goal of full access to information for the blind, we might consider to slow down a bit, but certainly not until then!

Thank you for your attention.